



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Southeastern States Field Office
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IN REPLY REFER TO:
3425 RAM

DECISION RECORD
And
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
For
BEST COAL, INC. LEASE ALES-55199

**RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT,
LAND USE ANALYSIS, and ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

DOI-BLM-ES-020-2012-0039-EA

Background

The Resource Management Plan Amendment/Land Use Analysis/ Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Best Coal, Inc. coal lease presents an analysis of the environmental, social, and economic effects of the Proposed Action (PA). The PA is to offer for lease approximately 160 acres of split estate federal coal for surface mining. The tract would be leased as Federal Coal Lease ALES-55199 by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM). As an addition of acreage to the Narley Mine, the life of the mine would be extended. Existing and permitted surface facilities would be used to support surface mining activities. The No Action Alternative is to not lease the federal coal.

The BLM, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of the Interior Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation, and Enforcement (OSMRE), conducted the environmental analysis. A third party, McGehee Engineering Corp., was contracted to write the EA. The EA specifically addresses the potential consequences of implementing the PA and the No Action Alternative. The analysis was initiated by the agencies in response to an application to lease federal coal beneath the tract by competitive leasing protocol, submitted to the BLM.

The EA was tiered to the analyses presented in the *2008 Alabama and Mississippi Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement* programmatic document. An amendment to the Resource Management Plan (RMP) for surface coal mining is included in the EA which is consistent with the 2008 RMP.



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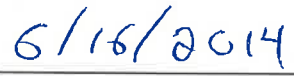


The proposed action does not significantly affect energy supply, distribution, and/or use and therefore a Statement of Adverse Energy Impact is not required.

Finding of No Significant Impact

On the basis of the information contained in the EA, and all other information available to me as is summarized above, it is my determination that the Proposed Action does not constitute a major Federal Action affecting the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is unnecessary and will not be prepared.


Bruce Dawson
Southeastern States Field Manager


Date

Decision Record

It is my decision to authorize the Coal Lease by Application ALES 55199 as described in the proposed action of the Federal Coal Lease ALES-55199 EA. This decision is contingent on meeting all mitigating measures and monitoring requirements listed below.

Mitigation - The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), under the Clean Air Act, has developed a complex system of regulations to protect air quality and is authorized to implement provisions of the Clean Air Act. This would assure compliance with related air quality standards. In addition, the Alabama Surface Mining Commission, (ASMC, as the agency authorized to enforce requirements of SMCRA, would monitor the operation to insure health and safety of the public and protection of the environment through the control of attendant air pollution.

Mitigation -The agencies authorized to enforce State and Federal regulations (committed mitigation) would monitor the proposed action to insure the public health and safety, and protection of the environment (OSMRE is the agency authorized to enforce the associated requirements of SMCRA).

Rational

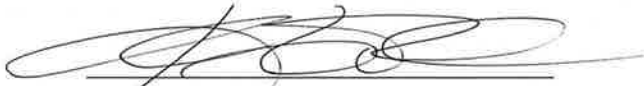
The BLM participated in preparing this document as the United States Department of the Interior's delegated agency for leasing Federal minerals. This action meets the objectives of 43 CFR 3425, Leasing on Application. The EA was prepared in order to provide the BLM's Authorized Officer with the information necessary to make a decision regarding whether the proposed action, leasing Federal minerals, will have a significant impact on the human environment. The EA includes a discussion of the proposed action, reasonable alternatives,



public participation in the EA, estimate of recoverable coal, the existing environment, an analysis of anticipated impacts from the proposed action and alternatives and mitigating measures to lessen the severity of impacts. The action is contingent on the federal coal tract being successfully leased on a competitive basis with the highest acceptable bonus bid determining the lessee.

The proposed action, as mitigated, meets the criteria described in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to make decisions that are based on understanding of environmental consequences and take action to protect, restore and enhance the environment and to prevent undue and unnecessary degradation of public land.

As part of the LBA process, a public hearing was held on November 20, 2014 to solicit comments from the public and/or other agencies on the EA, the Maximum Economic Recovery of the Coal and the Fair Market Value of the resource as determined by BLM, prior to the lease sale. No comments were received during the 30 day comment period.



John F. Ruhs
State Director

16 February 2015

Date